

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

This is a response to the Office Action mailed April 22, 2004, in the above-identified application, and consists of an amendment after final action under 37 CFR 1.116. Please note the attorney's new docket number 3115/1.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicant notes and appreciates the Examiner's indication in paragraph 8 of the Office Action that Claims 27, 63 and 72 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

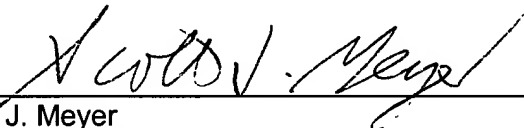
In order to reduce the issues in this case and place the application in condition for early allowance, applicant's attorney has rewritten Claims 27, 63 and 72 in independent form and submitted them herewith in the form of new claims 154, 155 and 156. All of the other claims have been cancelled.

It is respectfully submitted that since each of the three allowable claims was dependent on a base claim and two intervening claims, it simplifies the Listing of Claims by submitting the allowable claims in the form of new claims rather than by rewriting with strikeovers and underlining. It is understood that this is acceptable procedure. It is respectfully submitted that these three new claims contain all of the limitations of the base claim and the intervening claims on which the allowable claims were dependent.

It is submitted that the foregoing amendment complies with the provisions of 37 CFR 1.116 since it merely cancels claims and complies with matters of form to rewrite allowable claims in independent form expressly set forth in the Office Action of April 22, 2004.

In view of the above amendment and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that Claims 154-156 are allowable. Allowance thereof is courteously solicited. In the event that any other formalities are required with respect to the allowable claims, applicant will appreciate having the Examiner notify applicant's attorney at his below-indicated Telephone or Facsimile numbers.

Respectfully submitted,



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SJM/mrr

May 19, 2004



"Express Mail" Mailing Number: EV 438 930 298 US

Date of Deposit: May 19, 2004

In Re: Serial No. 09/249,220

Atty. Docket No. 3115/1

CERTIFICATE OF MAILING PURSUANT TO 37 CFR 1.10

I hereby certify that the attached correspondence [3115/1 – *Amendment C*] is being deposited with the United States Postal Service "Express Mail Post Office to Addressee" service under 37 CFR 1.10 on the date indicated above and addressed to: MAIL STOP AF, Commissioner for Patents, P. O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.

By: 

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Registered Patent Attorney

Date: May 19, 2004